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International Bureau

INTERNATIONAL APPLICATION PUBLISHED UNDER THE PATENT COOPERATION TREATY (PCT)

(51) International Patent Classification ⁷ : A61K 49/00	A1	(11) International Publication Number: WO 00/16810 (43) International Publication Date: 30 March 2000 (30.03.00)
(21) International Application Number: PCT/EP99/07088 (22) International Filing Date: 16 September 1999 (16.09.99) (30) Priority Data: 10/283301 18 September 1998 (18.09.98) JP <i>18 Mar 01/30 mns</i> (71) Applicant (for all designated States except US): SCHERING AKTIENGESELLSCHAFT [DE/DE]; Müllerstrasse 178, D-13353 Berlin (DE). (71) Applicant (for US only): FUJI PHOTO FILM CO., LTD. [JP/JP]; 210, Nakanuma, Minamiashigara-shi, Kanagawa 250-0193 (JP). (72) Inventors; and (75) Inventors/Applicants (for US only): MIWA, Naoto [JP/JP]; 2-22-16, Matsugaoka, Takatsuki-shi, Osaka 569-1031 (JP). INAGAKI, Michihito [JP/JP]; 16-10-303, Minoh 3-chome, Minoh-shi, Osaka 562-0001 (JP). EGUCHI, Hiroaki [JP/JP]; 1-72, Seiwadainishi 2-chome, Kawanishi-shi, Hyogo 666-0143 (JP). OKUMURA, Masafumi [JP/JP]; 4-21, Chino 1-chome, Otsu-shi, Shiga 520-0111 (JP). INAGAKI, Yoshio [JP/JP]; Fuji Photo Film Co., Ltd., 210, Naganuma, Minamiashigara-shi, Kanagawa 250-0193 (JP). HARADA, Toru [JP/JP]; Fuji Photo Film Co., Ltd.,		210, Nakanuma, Minamiashigara-shi, Kanagawa 250-0193 (JP). (81) Designated States: AE, AL, AM, AT, AU, AZ, BA, BB, BG, BR, BY, CA, CH, CN, CR, CU, CZ, DE, DK, DM, EE, ES, FI, GB, GD, GE, GH, GM, HR, HU, ID, IL, IN, IS, JP, KE, KG, KP, KR, KZ, LC, LK, LR, LS, LT, LU, LV, MD, MG, MK, MN, MW, MX, NO, NZ, PL, PT, RO, RU, SD, SE, SG, SI, SK, SL, TJ, TM, TR, TT, UA, UG, US, UZ, VN, YU, ZA, ZW, ARIPO patent (GH, GM, KE, LS, MW, SD, SL, SZ, TZ, UG, ZW), Eurasian patent (AM, AZ, BY, KG, KZ, MD, RU, TJ, TM), European patent (AT, BE, CH, CY, DE, DK, ES, FI, FR, GB, GR, IE, IT, LU, MC, NL, PT, SE), OAPI patent (BF, BJ, CF, CG, CI, CM, GA, GN, GW, ML, MR, NE, SN, TD, TG). Published <i>With international search report.</i> <i>Before the expiration of the time limit for amending the claims and to be republished in the event of the receipt of amendments.</i>
(54) Title: NEAR INFRARED FLUORESCENT CONTRAST AGENT AND FLUORESCENCE IMAGING (57) Abstract <p>A near infrared fluorescent contrast agent comprising a compound having three or more sulfonic acid groups in a molecule, and a method of fluorescence imaging comprising introducing the near infrared fluorescent contrast agent of the present invention into a living body, exposing the body to an excitation light, and detecting near infrared fluorescence from the contrast agent. The near infrared fluorescent contrast agent of the present invention is excited by an excitation light and emits near infrared fluorescence. This infrared fluorescence is superior in transmission through biological tissues. Thus, detection of lesions in the deep part of a living body has been made possible. In addition, the inventive contrast agent is superior in water solubility and low toxic, and therefore, it can be used safely.</p>		